

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8730

INFO AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 14054

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGSC PINT, RP

SUBJECT: OSMENA/LOPEZ EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED

1. SENATOR TANADA TOLD EMBASSY NOVEMBER 29 THAT FOLLOWING BARGAINING SESSION BETWEEN SENATORS TANADA AND DIOKNO, AND DEFENSE SECRETARY ENRILE THAT ENDED 6 P.M., THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, ENRILE AGREED IN WRITING TO RELEASE OF OSMENA/LOPEZ IN STAGES AND RELEASE OF OTHER DETAINEES AS WELL. STRESSING NEED FOR PRESERVING IMAGE OF REGIME, ENRILE AGREED TO A) MOVING OSMENA/LOPEZ TO V.LUNA HOSPITAL FORTWITH (THEY ARE THERE NOW); B) SUBSEQUENT GRANT OF DAY PASSES TO VISIT FAMILY; C) RELEASE FROM DETENTION IN FEBRUARY UNDER SAME CONDITIONS AS THOSE IMPOSED ON DIOKNO. NO CHARGES WILL BE BROUGHT AGAINST THEM. DETAINEES ARE EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30. THOSE RELEASED WILL INCLUDE TANADA'S SON PLUS JAKE LOPEZ AND GEORGE GADDI, ALL EXECUTIVES OF ABS-CBN, SOME PERSONS FROM OSMENA SIDE PLUS A NUMBER OF OTHERS.

2. ACCORDING TO TANADA, OSMENA WAS ALREADY BEGINNING TO SHOW SIGNES OF DEBILITATION FROM FAST WHICH HAD BEEN STRICUTLY ADHERED TO DESPITE EFFORTS OF AFP TO TEMPT THEM WITH FOOD OR TO THREATEN THEM, ACCOMRDIING TO TANADA, WITH  
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PLANS TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST THEM. TANADA SAID FAST

HAD BEEN VERY CAREFULLY PLANNED IN ADVANCE BETWEEN TANADA DIOKNO AND OSMENA/LOPEZ. TANADA FELT THAT FAST HAD ACHIEVED ITS PURPOSE AND THAT STAND OF AMERICAN PUBLISHERS AGAINST DETENTION OF LOPEZ AND REPRESSIVE GOVERNMENTS IN GENERAL HAD BEEN STRAW WHICH HAD FINALLY BROKEN REGIME'S BACK.

3. AP HAS REPORTED RELEASE OF OSMENA/LOPEZ INCLUDING AN UNATTRIBUTED ALLEGATION THAT TWO MEN HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN NOVEMBER 1972 NOT ONLY FOR PLANNING ASSASSINATION OF MARCOS BUT OF PRESIDENT SUHARTO, WHO VISITED PHILIPPINES IN FEBRUARY 1972. REFERENCE TO SUHARTO REPORTEDLY INCLUDED IN COPY OF CHARGES FILED AUGUST 8, 1972 NAMING THEM AS PART OF 12 MAN ASSASSINATION SYNDICATE. AP STATES GOVERNMENT HAD NO COMMENT ON RELEASE OR CHARGES.

4. COMMENT: HUNGER STRIKE AMPLIFIED BY ORCHESTRATED EXTERNAL PRESSURES OF FOREIGN PRESS AND SUPPLEMENTED BY COMPLEMENTARY INTERNAL PRESSURE EXERTED BY ARCHBISHOP CLEARLY HAS FORCED GOVERNMENT TO CAVE. ULTIMATE INTENT OF CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT DETENTION POLICY NOT YET EVIDENT, BUT, ASSUMING REGIME KEEPS ITS WORD, RELEASES WILL CONSTITUTE SUBSTANTIAL MODIFICATION OF POLITICAL PRISONER ISSUE. ACCORDING TO TANADA, ONLY POLITICIAN OR POLITICALLY-LINKED INDIVIDUAL OF ANY SUBSTANCE GOVERNMENT WILL HOLD ASIDE FROM AQUINO-WHOM HE WAS CERTAIN GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT REPEAT NOT RELEASE-WOULD BE FORMER MAYOR GANZON WHO WAS TRIED AND CONVICTED OF MURDER.

5. DECISION NOT TO BRING CHARGES AGAINST OSMENA-LOPEZ PROBABLY MEANS LEHMANN WILL NOT BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL. GOVERNMENT OBVIOUSLY HAS LITTLE TO GAIN BY SEPARATE TRIAL THAT WOULD CAST DOUBT ON SINCERITY OF ITS POLICY, OR ON NEW SOCIETY GENERALLY.

6. WE WOULD EXPECT THAT GOVERNMENT WILL PLAY RELEASE OF INDIVIDUALS AS DEMONSTRATION OF ITS CONCERN FOR HUMANITY, AND ITS STABILITY. ALTHOUGH GOVERNMENT MAY WIN SOME COMPLIMENTS FOR ITS ACTION, IT WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE OPENED ITSELF UP TO SIMILAR CAMPAIGNS ON OTHER ISSUES.  
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NEXT ISSUE COULD BE GOVERNMENT ABUSE AS REPRESENTED IN ARCE AND ALVAREZ CASES AND, POSSIBLY, HILAO CASE (SEE SEPTTEL).  
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NNN

## Message Attributes

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